

Blackmagic Design vient de racheter daVinci !

Écrit par Jean-Christophe Perney
Mercredi, 09 Septembre 2009 00:10

La société Blackmagic Design connue pour ses cartes d'acquisition vidéo confirme le rachat de la société daVinci société mythique de l'audiovisuel spécialisée dans les outils d'étalonnage. A lire le communiqué en anglais parue sur le site FX qui a reçu un communiqué de Grant Petty de Blackmagic Design annonçant le rachat de daVinci, la stratégie produit et les motivations associées :

BlackMagic Design Buys daVinci – Confirmed :

Filed under: fxNewswire by Mike Seymour @ 8:42 pm on September 7, 2009

Black Magic Design (BMD) has bought daVinci color grading systems. Black Magic known for it world class signal convertors and hardware boxes. daVinci, makes of Resolve and Revival, has been based out of Florida, but interestingly, software R&D for some time has been based in Singapore – also home to Black Magic's head office. With this move, the new company will be increasing – almost doubling or tripling – their R&D staff on the Resolve and Revival products.

What is changing is the companies reliance on custom build in house Hardware. daVinci will be showing some incredible new technology at IBC next week that extends and changes the companies technology focus. For all current daVinci customers there will be no break in support, development or service.

There has been a reduction of US staff as part of the move but this is linked to R&D changes rather than a contraction of the companies activities. daVinci and other companies have been hit with the global economic climate, and changes in the DI industry – notable the expansion of DI to a wider audience and the withdrawal of some major houses from DI altogether, recently for example Framestore in the UK closed its whole DI department, (although Framestore's Digital Lab was not primarily a daVinci house). Industry insiders point to how well this positions BMD to compete at an even higher level – while simultaneously allowing daVinci to service a wider market.

fxguide spoke directly with daVinci. There is a rumor going around – that story is not true, but we can confirm this is 100% true. From an email from Grant Petty:

Hi,

I have been a bit surprised by some of the really odd rumors I have heard in the last day, so I thought a quick update on what's really going on might be a good idea.

Sorry if I am a bit blunt in this email, but as you can understand it's a busy time at the moment, and I am just doing a full brain dump here.

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Last Friday, Blackmagic Design purchased DaVinci. Because DaVinci was losing money there are a lot of changes going on, but most of these changes will bring some big improvements as well.

Firstly, we have not “sacked everyone in Florida and closed down the facility”. The only people in Florida who have been let go were managers, office staff and engineers working on products that had no future. The engineering team for Resolve had already been cut back a few months ago, but now we have already rehired those engineers. We are hiring even more now.

The team for Resolve should be 3-4 times bigger in about 2 months time, and we have a lot of good ideas to work on. Resolve is just incredible and deserves more resources. Also some of the research engineers had been re-tasked into management roles which they hated, so we are keeping them and letting them get back to basic research which is what they truly love.

Revival had almost no engineers working on it, but it needs a new user interface and extra features. It will also have more engineering added to it. As for manufacturing in Florida, we have not made any decisions here, but manufacturing is really only 3 people, and a lot of manual systems. We need to drastically improve that.

We still have the same great support team in LA and Germany, however some of the other support engineers were in strange locations. There was no one in New York, and we need to fix that quickly. DaVinci support will stay exclusively for DaVinci products only.

We are going to stop marketing 2K based systems, as it's an old product now, and Resolve should be the focus now. But we do have a massive number of spare parts, boards, etc, and we will be moving a lot of those parts to the support offices around the world for faster turn around in case of faults.

On the support contracts. We are going to honor all current support contracts, but we are not going to sign any new ones.

I have never really heard of anyone who has used the cost of the support contract in failed boards, and I think it's a waste of money. Products are just not that faulty to justify such a high support contract fee. I think it's much better to pay if a fault happens. This also makes it easy for people to buy a second hand DaVinci product from e-bay and only pay what's needed to get it working again. We want to encourage people to buy second hand DaVinci equipment and have confidence it will be supported cost effectively. There are lots of good second hand equipment on the market, and we can help keep its resale value.

We are going to improve the marketing for DaVinci products. DaVinci Resolve is an amazing system that's not being sold very well. Revival is jaw dropping, and is like some kind of magic watching it work. These are incredible products that need to be marketed much better than they are now.

I guess one question people will ask is will we make lower cost versions of the DaVinci products. I don't know about this, and this was not the reason we purchased the company, the

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performance was. We have two Resolve systems in our post production facility and we kept asking DaVinci for more features. It was through these conversations we learnt that DaVinci was for sale.

DaVinci Resolve is unique because it uses multiple linux computers linked together with InfiniBand connections and multiple GPU cards so you get the real time performance advantage it has. I don't think that can be lowered in price much, however over the next few years as technology advances this might happen a little.

However, DaVinci is different to a DeckLink card because it's a high performance computing based tool. Our focus will really be on adding more features. That's what we want, and I guess others would too.

Hopefully this covers everyone's questions for now. We will be on the DaVinci booth and the Blackmagic Design booth at IBC this week, and there is a lot more to talk about. If you have any other questions and can make it to the show, please drop by, and we also want input from DaVinci customers too. We might not know answers to every single question yet, but we are working though it. Give us 6 months, and I think the improvements will become clearer.

In reality, I cannot believe we have purchased such a legendary brand, and one of the things that totally blew my mind when I first started in post production as an engineer way back in 1988 was the color grading room with a DaVinci. The image on the monitor was such incredible quality, I just stood there staring speechless. It was amazing. Now we have our opportunity to care for the DaVinci name, and it's exciting but a little terrifying too! We have some big standards to live up to, but we want to exceed what people expect.

Take care,

Grant Petty
Blackmagic Design